



Call Memo – Bezos Earth Fund: Collaboration for Justice40

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APPROVED BY: OPEEE

CALL SHEET

April 29, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: Rosemary Enobakhare, Office of Public Engagement and Environmental Education, 202-573-4614

CC:

CONTACT: Danielle Deane-Ryan, Bezos Earth Fund

EVENT DATE: Friday, April 29

TIME: 2:30 pm

SUBJECT: Collaboration for Justice40

STAFFING: Rosemary Enobakhare, 202-573-4614

PURPOSE OF CALL AND LAST INTERACTION

To benefit from **YOUR** perspective on how future grantmaking could maximize its impact both in the US and abroad and explore opportunities for multi-sector collaboration.

The Bezos Earth Fund has made significant grants to support climate and environmental justice organizations that serve a wide range of communities being hardest hit by the climate crisis. These organizations are working on solutions that will benefit their underserved communities while solving the climate crisis. Many are working to make the Biden Administration's Justice40 initiative. These grantee partners include scholars like Dr. Bob Bullard (whom **YOU** met with recently), as well as environmental justice organizations like WeAct for Environmental Justice



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and the Asian Pacific Environment Network (whose former ED is on the White House Environmental Justice Council).

KEY POINTS SECTION

- **YOU** will highlight EPA's Environmental Justice work so far in the Administration and provide examples of how the Agency is protecting marginalized communities
- **YOU** will discuss your experience meeting with community members during the Journey to Justice tour
- Partnership is how we will achieve our Environmental Justice priorities

BACKGROUND

Bezos Earth Fund

The Bezos Earth Fund was created by a commitment of \$10 billion from Jeff Bezos to be disbursed as grants within the current decade. We are committed to fighting climate change and protecting nature.

The Programs Bezos Earth Fund focuses on include Nature Solutions; Environmental Justice; Decarbonization of the Economy; Economics, Finance, and Markets; Monitoring and Accountability.

\$10 Billion donated in one decade and \$1.39 Billion granted so far.

Supporting the U.S. Justice40 Initiative – September and December 2021
Justice40 is the Biden administration's historic commitment to deliver 40% of the overall benefits of U.S. federal investments in clean energy, clean transit, affordable housing, and other areas to underserved communities. A great deal of work lies ahead to identify underserved communities, help resources reach them, and ensure Justice40 succeeds in advancing environmental justice and creating new economic opportunities in these communities. This project supports leading organizations to connect Justice40 design and implementation at the federal level with organization and efforts at the state and local level.



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The Earth Fund committed \$150M for 2021 to support the Justice40 Initiative. Groups and projects funded include:

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

- It's great to be here with all of you.
- I appreciate the tremendous work you're doing to help advance many of our shared goals.
- When I stepped into this role just over a year ago, I directed my team to go further and faster than ever before to tackle the climate crisis.
- In the time since, we've hit the ground running, leaving no stone unturned.
 - We issued the most ambitious **federal greenhouse gas emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks** ever.
 - We also issued a **final rule to cap and phase down the production and consumption of HFCs** in the United States.
 - And we proposed a **new rule to sharply reduce methane from the oil and natural gas industry** – including, for the first time, reductions from existing sources nationwide.
- When it comes to protecting marginalized communities who are the frontlines of climate change and pollution, we made clear that this **EPA will not hesitate to use our authority to hold polluters accountable**.
- **In November, I traveled throughout the southern United States on our Journey to Justice tour – going from Mississippi to Louisiana to Texas – and met with communities who've suffered unimaginable environmental injustices.**
 - The conditions I saw were unacceptable – generations of family members diagnosed with cancer, likely connected to the pollution in the air they breathe, children who go to school a stone's throw away from a chemical manufacturing plant, barren land where a community once proudly stood before being swept away by Hurricane Katrina.
 - Following that trip, we announced **a series of initial actions** – from ordering the installation of community air monitors to holding companies more accountable for their actions in overburdened



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communities – **that respond directly to the concerns I saw and heard on the ground.**

- **I’ve also spent a lot of time meeting with communities who’ve been impacted by our nation’s devastating legacy of lead pipes.**
 - I was with Vice President Harris in Milwaukee not too long ago, where I met a woman whose life had been turned upside down after she discovered lead in her home. Her little boy was lead-poisoned and hospitalized repeatedly. They wound up homeless not long after that...
- I have personally seen conditions that are so shocking I’ve had to remind myself I’m still standing in the United States of America. Perhaps most egregious was when I was in Lowndes County, Alabama.
 - I visited Lowndes County, so that I could see up close the injustices that folks have been living with for decades – pipes protruding from the side of their homes, spilling waste into the same places where their children play.
 - I’ll never forget the two beautiful little children I met... their toys scattered around a lagoon filled with waste. It was as if these children were conditioned to accept that this is just the way things are. But they shouldn’t be, not for the children of Lowndes County... and not for anyone.
- **That’s what makes the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law such a gamechanger for our work – and for our ability to enhance the lives of people who’ve been hurting for a long time...**
 - The law provides EPA with an unprecedented infusion of funding – \$60 billion to upgrade water infrastructure, replace lead pipes, clean up toxic waste sites, and electrify the nation’s school bus fleet. This is an historic opportunity to correct longstanding injustices, and EPA is ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work.
- **That’s also why the President established Justice 40, so that those who’ve long borne the burden of pollution directly benefit from the federal government’s investments.** This is a huge chance to change the way government operates and who it serves, and EPA will play its part to push Justice40 as far as we can.



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- Another area that's a top priority for me is environmental education. For decades, EPA has had an Office of Environmental Education, but it had been relegated to the backburner. We're changing that and elevating this work wherever and whenever we can.
- **But we need partners in this mission. We have an ambitious agenda to fulfill – one that is deeply focused on ensuring the health and wellbeing of all people and all communities.** The work you're doing will be important to helping us meet that agenda.
- So, I'd love to hear from all of you about your priorities and how we can work together to achieve them.



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BIOGRAPHIES

Andrew Steer, CEO, Bezos Earth Fund



Dr. Andrew Steer is the President and CEO of the Bezos Earth Fund. Andrew joined the Earth Fund from the World Resources Institute, where he served as President & CEO for over eight years. Prior to this, Andrew served as the World Bank's Special Envoy for Climate Change, Director General at the UK Department of International Development, and Head of the World Bank in Vietnam and Indonesia. Dr. Steer is a Global Agenda Trustee for the World Economic Forum, a Commissioner of the Energy Transitions Commission, a member of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED), co-chair of the Greening the Belt and Road Coalition, and member of the Advisory Committees of the Asian Development Bank and Bank of America. Andrew was educated at St. Andrews University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Cambridge University. He has a PhD in international economics and finance.

Danielle Deane-Ryan, Director of the Equitable Climate Solutions program, Bezos Earth Fund



Danielle Deane-Ryan has devoted her career to her passion for advancing strategic, equitable climate crisis solutions. She is the inaugural Director of Equitable Climate Solutions at the Bezos Earth Fund. Prior, Danielle was a senior advisor to foundations including the Libra Foundation, the Donors of Color Network and the Heising-Simons Foundation. Danielle has held executive roles at The Nathan Cummings Foundation; within the Obama Administration at the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy; Green 2.0; the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies; and the Hewlett Foundation.

Danielle is a current member of the National Academies Accelerating Decarbonization Committee. She serves on boards of Resource Media and the



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Clean Energy States Alliance. Danielle has an M.Sc. from the London School of Economics in Environment and Development, and a B.A. from Williams College in Political Economy with an Environmental Studies Concentration. Danielle was awarded the Williams College Bicentennial Medal in 2019 for her work on Environmental Justice.